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THE EXTENSION HORTICULTURIST

March 1, 1921.

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*	23d to 25th.	*
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*	Are you going to take a vacation next summer?	*
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Office of Horticultural and Pomological Investigations
and States Relations Service Cooperating.
U. S. Department of Agriculture,
Washington, D. C.

MEETING OF ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

Lexington, Kentucky, February 15 to 17, inclusive.

Three years ago at the meeting of the Association of Southern Agricultural Workers in Birmingham, Alabama, a special meeting of the phytopathologists and horticulturists was held for the purpose of rounding up some of the problems relative to the sweet potato industry. Out of this has grown the organization of a horticultural section of the association.

Two sessions of the horticultural section were held during the recent meeting at Lexington, Kentucky, one jointly with the phytopathologists and the other of the horticulturists alone in which two programs were combined covering investigational and extension subjects.

The general sessions of the association were of special interest and the papers presented were full of splendid suggestions and reports. The address of the President, Prof. Dan T. Gray, on the subject of the "Ideal Administrative Officer," was most excellent and while for the most part in the "lighter vein," it contained some very "high protein" food for thought.

In the joint session of the horticulturists with the phytopathologists the following subjects were given special attention:

"Sweet Potato Storage in Louisiana," by M. Hull, Extension Specialist.

"Further Observations on Sweet Potato Storage in Alabama," by Prof. G. C. Starcher.

"Recent Progress on Sweet Potato Storage Problems," by L. L. Harter, Washington, D. C.

These papers, together with the discussions that followed brought out the fact that there is still much to be learned relative to the factors governing the successful storage of sweet potatoes, but that in the main, the methods now recommended by the Federal Department and the states are sound and the greatest danger lies in the use of so called patented processes and the departure from established proven methods. The workers in the various states report a large number of storage houses, especially of the smaller or farm type, having been built during the past year. They also report a more satisfactory attitude toward the extension work on the part of commercial sweet potato storage men and that the majority of the commercial plants are now being operated according to the lines laid down by the state and Federal specialists.

During the research session a paper was read by Prof. J. R. Cooper, Horticulturist of the Arkansas Station upon the "Nutrition of Fruit Trees." Prof. Cooper gave the results of work being conducted in the state and told of the methods employed.

"Root-rot and Other Troubles in Growing Head Lettuce," was the title of a paper by Prof. A. J. Onley of the Kentucky station.

"Investigations with Muscadine Grapes," was the title of a very interesting paper delivered by Mr. Charles Dearing. Mr. Dearing called attention to the enormous possibilities in the production of grape juice, jellies and other products from the Muscadine type of grape which is so well adapted to growing in the greater part of the southern states. The

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results that have been obtained in working out a proper system of pruning Muscadine grapes were illustrated by Mr. Dearing. By this system a portion of each vine is renewed every year so that it may be kept in an active producing condition, Mr. Dearing showed how the handling of the products of the Muscadine grape has been made a commercial possibility through cooperation with the home demonstration agents and the girls' clubs, the managers of the three leading railroads that traverse North Carolina and by cooperation with outside markets in opening up a suitable market for Muscadine grape products.

Following the research session the Horticultural Extension Program was opened by a report on "The Present Status of Horticultural Extension Work in the South," by W. R. Beattie of the United States Department of Agriculture. Persons representing the various states were called upon to give brief reports of the work being done in their respective states. A summary of these reports will be given at another time.

"The Publicity Phase of Horticultural Extension Work," was the title of a very interesting paper by Mr. F. H. Jeter, Agricultural Editor for the Southern Fertilizer Association. Mr. Jeter brought out very clearly the importance of so presenting extension material that it may find a ready acceptance on the part of the grower. Mr. Jeter stated that the farmers of the south today do not want fancy write-ups, but that they do want to be told in the plainest possible terms the proper methods of doing things.

Prof. G. C. Starcher of Alabama gave a report upon the spread of the Mexican bean beetle and called attention to the relation of its advance to southern horticulture. Prof. Starcher reports that this beetle now covers a territory of about 160 miles in length and 60 miles in width in Northern Alabama, northwestern Georgia and southern Tennessee. In the vicinity of Birmingham it has absolutely destroyed all garden beans, cow peas and Soy beans in its path. Thus far no effective method of poisoning or otherwise controlling the beetle has been found. The adult beetle is strong on the wing and it travels readily from one field to another. Its spread is rapid and present indications are that it will prove the greatest menace of all the insects that have been imported into this country. Reports show that it can hibernate through a winter temperature of 20 degrees below zero and delights in a temperature of 120 degrees in the shade. Where poison is applied the insects leave the poisoned plants and seek other sources of food.

The "Extension Problems of the Landscape Specialist," were reviewed by Mr. H. W. Harvey of the Georgia College of Agriculture. Mr. Harvey called attention to the methods being followed in Georgia whereby the owner is given suggestions for the improving of his premises by the use of inexpensive and simple plantings, mainly of trees and shrubs that are native to the locality. Mr. Harvey stressed the importance when listing trees or shrubs of giving both the scientific and common names so that the prospective purchaser would be enabled to identify a common one when he saw it listed in the catalogue.

"Orchard Renovation Projects in Kentucky," were discussed by Mr. H. R. Niswonger of the Kentucky College. Mr. Niswonger described the methods that are followed in Kentucky in putting on pruning, spraying and other lines of extension work connected with the improvement of neglected orchards.

"Under "Report of Committee on Horticultural Extension," the work of the past year was reviewed and progress noted. The outstanding extension problems are orchard renovation including pruning, spraying, cultivation and fertilizing, the planting and care of home fruit orchards, the planting of many small commercial orchards, the growing, storage and marketing of sweet potatoes and the landscape improvement of farm homes, schools, churches and public grounds. Work with nut bearing trees and citrus fruits are also included in a number of the states. The "Committee on Extension Work in Horticulture" has been made permanent and the principles included in their report last year made the policy of the horticultural extension section. For the benefit of those who have not been attending the meetings the report made last year, together with progress report, follows.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON EXTENSION WORK IN HORTICULTURE.

Your Committee on Extension Work in Horticulture beg to submit the following report and recommendations:

All of the 15 southern states are now doing definite horticultural extension work under project agreements. Specialists are employed to head the work in every state with the exception of Florida. Extension work in most of the states is limited to the localities where a request for work comes either direct from the people or from the county agent or home demonstration agent, as the representative of the people. Since the inauguration of the women's work, there has been a constantly growing demand for work that pertains to the improvement of conditions around the house.

At present the sweet potato is the most universal horticultural crop of the South receiving attention by the horticultural extension forces. Home orchards and home gardens are next in order of importance. Dependent upon locality and climatic conditions, the following crops are receiving special attention: Apples, peaches, Muscadine grapes, pecans, citrus fruits, small fruits and figs, Irish potatoes, tomatoes, and melons. The landscape improvement of farm homes, school grounds and public grounds is also coming in for attention in several of the states.

The important things, however, for us to consider from the horticultural extension standpoint are the contacts and methods used in the conduct of the horticultural extension work. First, there must be a clear understanding between the workers of all departments and divisions doing extension work in horticulture as regards subject matter and policies. Frequent conferences of the workers should be held in order to form a clear understanding as regards these matters. It is recommended that the closest cooperation and agreement exist between the various divisions, including home economics, entomological and pathological workers, and where practical, the pathological and entomological work dealing with well-established principles in horticultural practice should be conducted either directly under the supervision of the horticultural leader or with his thorough approval. Second, it is recommended that all demonstration work be organized on a definite project basis and executed on time, well in advance of the season so that the growers may follow the practices taught in the demonstrations.

It is further recommended that all subject and publicity matter used in connection with the extension work in horticulture and the method of expression be determined by the head of the division or the specialist in charge of the work and it is our belief that publicity material will be more effective if given personality and local color.

It is further recommended that suitable records be kept of all demonstration work in order to show results of the work, keeping these records well out of the purely investigational field. In all cases the fullest cooperation should exist between the specialist in horticultural extension and the county agent under whose direction the work is being conducted. All demonstrations should be conducted under a definite project which includes the grower, the county agent, the extension specialist, and the horticultural division under which the work is organized. This tends to safeguard the continuity of the work and reduce the personal factor, making the horticultural division and not any particular individual the source of supervision. It is our belief that the success of any piece of extension work is dependent upon the determination of the real problems involved, the soundness of principle on which the work is planned and conducted, and the degree of effectiveness developed in the presentation of the demonstration and subject matter to the people. The final measure of success of any demonstration is the extent to which the practice demonstrated is actually adopted and followed in any community.

In view of the importance of extension work in the development of our southern horticulture, it is recommended that a standing committee on horticultural extension work in the South be appointed for the purpose of reporting to the Horticultural Section of this Association at each annual meeting on the organization, policies and methods of horticultural extension work as conducted in the southern states together with any general recommendations for the improvement or further conduct of the work.

W. R. Beattie, C. D. Matthews, T. H. McHatton,
G. C. Starcher, G. L. Tiebout, - Committee.

PROGRESS REPORT OF COMMITTEE

Submitted at the Lexington Meeting.

Horticultural Extension work in the southern states has been very materially strengthened during the past year through the reorganization of the work in a number of the states also by the appointment of additional specialists to carry on the work. The principles laid down in the report of the committee on extension work in horticulture last year have served as a guide for the workers and the reports made this year indicate marked progress both in methods and scope of activity.

Especial progress has been made in the development of the fruit industry of the Piedmont section and in east Texas. The citrus industry of Florida and southern Alabama has come in for a share of extension work, while the development of the sweet potato industry has made remarkable progress. The usual attention has been given to the promotion of home gardens, both on farms and among industrial workers in mill towns and cities. A remarkable interest is shown in the planting and care of home fruit gardens. Extension work in connection with the production and uses of Muscadine grapes in the Atlantic Coast and Gulf States has been given especial attention by home demonstration and club leaders.

Among the important changes in personnel are the appointment of Prof. T. C. Johnson, Director of the Virginia Truck Experiment Station at Norfolk, as Head of the Vegetable Garden Work of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute at Blacksburg. Prof. Johnson will continue in charge of the Truck Experiment Station but direct the policy and extension activities in vegetable lines for the college. Prof. J. H. Gourley, formerly of New Hampshire, has been appointed Head of the Horticultural Division of the West Virginia College of Agriculture at Morgantown. Prof. P. H. Rolfs, who for years has been a distinct leader in the horticultural work of Florida has resigned his position as Director of Extension and been succeeded by Dr. Willmon Newell. Mr. Paul T. Schooley of the Extension Division in North Carolina has resigned to accept work in commercial lines. Mr. Charles E. Dearing, formerly of the Federal Department, in charge of the Muscadine grape work at Willard, North Carolina, has been employed jointly by the State Department of Agriculture of North Carolina and the United States Department of Agriculture and will continue the work at Willard. Mr. F. E. Miller, formerly with the Department and detailed to the Pe Dee Sub-Station at Florence, South Carolina, has accepted a position in charge of field stations for the North Carolina State Department of Agriculture. Mr. K. C. Testover, Extension Horticulturist in Kentucky has gone to the Horticultural Department of the West Virginia College. These are a few of the changes that have taken place during the year, but there seems to be a more settled condition as regards the personnel of the extension forces in the southern states.

We have in the southern group of states some of the best examples of good organization for horticultural extension work. Unfortunately some of the

workers are compelled to give part of their time to other lines of work, but wherever the specialists are devoting their entire time to their particular branch of extension work they are securing marked results. The demand for the work on the part of county agents and local organizations is becoming greater, in fact, it is now necessary for the specialists to restrict their activities to the already organized counties and communities.

Orchard renovation and management is leading in the matter of requests for assistance. Sweet potato storing and marketing problems still continue to demand the attention of the specialists in at least 7 of the southern states. In view of the fact that this group of states produces about 80% of the sweet potatoes grown in the country and markets only about 20%, is sufficient justification for pushing this line of work. The great field of small fruit culture and truck growing of the Gulf and Atlantic States remains almost untouched from an extension standpoint. It is true that the large commercial interests have not in the past made demands upon the extension organizations, but they are now beginning to see the advantages of the work and are asking for assistance.

In view of the importance of the horticultural crops in connection with the conduct of club work, it is recommended that horticultural specialists give more attention to this branch of the work in the future. Among the phases of horticultural work that are especially adapted to club activities are apple, peach, and citrus fruit clubs, small fruit clubs, including strawberries, blackberries, dewberries and grapes, sweet potato clubs and early and late Irish potato clubs.

Another feature of the work that has gained in favor during the past year, especially with the home demonstration agents, is that of farmstead improvement. Cooperative work of this character, part in which has been taken by the Federal Department has been established in 9 southern states, the plan being to place 2 type demonstrations in each state, these to serve as a guide for the home demonstration workers of the state. In view of the importance of improving the living conditions of our southern people, it is only fitting and proper that extension horticulturists should give their best efforts to the promotion of this work.

CONFERENCE OF EXTENSION WORKERS AT SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS.

Prof. Close has just returned from a conference of extension workers of the 10 northeastern states held at Springfield, Massachusetts, February 23 to 25, inclusive. Extension specialists in fruit growing and marketing were invited to attend this conference and a special fruit section of the conference was organized. Organization methods and lines of work were given primary consideration rather than subject-matter. A committee which was appointed to summarize the proceedings of the section on fruit growing made the following report.

COMMITTEE REPORT - FRUIT SECTION

1. Session on Organization.

It is agreed that in general the county farm bureau must be the agency through which the specialist will find the major part of his employment. This is the logical source of opportunity for his work.

Programs should be built and the division of time of the specialist arrived at by a conference of county agents and specialists preferably held at the college of agriculture sometime during the late fall or early winter. Later regional conferences should be held by specialist and farm bureau workers interested in certain phases of the work.

It is impossible and impracticable to lay down hard and fast rules for

organization of work by the specialists. Conditions vary too much in the different states. While it is a first rate idea to think of the program as being brought out by the community in practice it works out that the specialist and the county agent will have to keep the ultimate responsibility for project development. If, as in the case, the college is legally responsible for the results of extension work, it hardly looks possible to delegate final responsibility to any individual or group in a community. The community should, however, in nearly all cases indicate the type of work which it desires.

In some states the basis for scheduling specialists is the requests of the county agents. It seems likely that all states may come to this method. The specialist should be a teacher of county agents and others who may develop into community project leaders.

2. COMMUNITY PRUNING AND SPRAYING CLUBS.

Cooperative spraying associations or cooperative pruning associations would appear to be a practical way to handle the apple growing problems of the small farm orchards. This should be organized by first determining what community in the state could best handle this proposition; that is, what community has the best lay out of such orchards, together with a good county agent. Have a meeting of the farmers concerned calling the state subject-matter specialist to show the benefits to be derived from proper spraying. Then perfect an organization right at this same first meeting, elect officers or directors and either elect or appoint a secretary. Since this secretary will be in effect the manager of the organization, he should be selected with care. He will buy the spray outfit, spray materials, etc., and attend to the carrying out of the spray schedule.

It may work out to be a better plan to employ a manager or foreman paying him day wages and looking to him for the efficiency of mechanical manipulation of the schedule. Pruning would come as a natural outgrowth of a spray campaign. Marketing will follow in its natural course.

3. COOPERATION WITH HOME DEMONSTRATION AGENTS.

It would appear that opportunity exists for much greater cooperation between fruit specialists and home demonstration agents. The home demonstration agent undoubtedly reaches a much greater number of people than the county agricultural agent. She would be a good agency for distribution of information on the best time to buy and the best way to use certain varieties of fruits. It should be possible for the fruit specialist to give the home demonstration agent accurate information on what are the best varieties of given fruits to produce the best manufactured products. The fruit specialist might be able to help the home demonstration agent in her calls for assistance along the line of decorative plantings about the farm home.

4. COOPERATIVE WITH CLUB AGENTS.

Fruit clubs in the junior extension work are especially valuable in the more closely settled sections of our states. These will need specific directions at the start and careful supervision by the specialist or by the club leader who happens to be very well grounded in fruit work.

Apple tree clubs appear to be rather impracticable because the "trees are too big and the boys too small." It would probably be best to urge small fruit clubs rather than tree fruit clubs.

5. ROADSIDE MARKETS.

Roadside markets have had a tremendous growth in the last three or four years in many sections of the eastern states. They have a wonderful future if those in charge will give the public a square deal. The specialists should urge upon the producers and others who may be operating these markets the avoidance of overcharging and misrepresentation of product. If care is not

exercised along these two lines adverse legislation for their regulation is likely to result.

6. COOPERATIVE PACKING ASSOCIATIONS.

These associations for the grading, packing and marketing of apples should be encouraged in communities or localities producing certain varieties of fruit in sufficient quantity to warrant car-lot shipment. In organizing these associations care must be exercised in the selection of the organization committee and especially in the selection of the secretary or manager. Membership in the association should be dependent on three elements; (1) The human element, that is, the sort of man the proposed member is; (2) The volume of business; (3) Production of fruit of uniform quality.

It is essential that the membership be not too serious for profits the first year. They must be educated to have confidence in the management. These associations are long time projects.

7. SELLING AT THE ORCHARD AT RETAIL.

This has been successful in many instances. The prices charged have generally been equal to the wholesale market in the nearest distributing center. It seems probable that a market for a considerable amount of fruit can be built up by sending from the producing sections into villages that do not produce any fruit of truck loads for sale at retail. This would of course need be handled rather carefully, but should develop into an efficient distributing agency.

It is the general sentiment of the fruit specialists representing the ten northern and eastern states that the outstanding feature of fruit development upon which they can unite is better general quality of eastern grown fruits. This effort to be directed toward the growing of better quality varieties and the promotion of such methods of growing, harvesting, standardizing and distributing fruits as will tend to place them in the hands of consumers in a more attractive and edible condition. It is believed that such practices will result in increased consumption and promote confidence and satisfaction on the part of the consumer.

VACATION CONFERENCE.

Mr. George P. Hoffman, Extension Horticulturist, Clemson College, S. C. is responsible for the suggestion that the fruit and vegetable specialists of the ten southeastern states get together for a vacation period of a week or ten days during the month of July and that during this period about five conference sessions on extension methods be held. Norfolk, Va. has been selected as a suitable place for such get together and Prof. T. C. Johnson, Director of the Va. Truck Exp. Station has extended the facilities of the Station for the conference part of the meet.

Arrangements will be made for accommodations at Virginia Beach where there is excellent bathing, good food and plenty of evening entertainment. The cost of room and meals at the beach will be about \$25.00 a week with bath house and bathing privileges thrown in. It will be expected that the married men will bring their wives and those having intentions along that line will be very properly chaperoned while at the beach. We want to hear from the extension workers of the southeastern states right away so that the plan can be consummated. We believe this is a good move.

